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ABSTRACT

This curriculum unit examines William Shakespeare's tragic play, "Romeo and Juliet." The unit calls the play "one of the greatest and saddest love stories of all time," and notes that artists across centuries and oceans have retold the tale of "Romeo and Juliet" in various forms and incarnations. It first presents background information about Shakespeare's life and about the Elizabethan England of his time. It also describes the Globe Theatre (built about 1599) where Shakespeare's plays were presented to the public. The unit provides a summary of the 5-act drama and considers the recurring motifs and images. It discusses the literary devices Shakespeare used in "Romeo and Juliet" to capture the public's attention, including puns, foreshadowing, metaphor, personification, oxymoron, and paradox. It also presents the entire play in one page, scene by scene and act by act. The next section of the unit explores the connections across the arts and highlights some favorite versions of the tragic tale as depicted in films, operas, ballets, and paintings. The unit then offers two lesson plans to facilitate students' understanding of the themes, plot, and characters present in "Romeo and Juliet," including creative writing using character analysis in the play; and enhancing students' ability to analyze and interpret dramatic scripts. The unit's lesson plans specify length, grade level, materials needed, relevant standards, and instructional objectives. They also offer additional teacher information and provide a step-by-step instructional plan. Contains an extensive resource list. (NKA)

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Exploring Romeo and Juliet

Living during a period of artistic energy, the Black Death, a strong monarch's reign, and the rise and fall of his theatre, William Shakespeare not only contributed substantially to the literary canon, but also contributed to-and was impacted by-the economic, social, and artistic conditions of the Elizabethan era.

About Shakespeare

The works of William Shakespeare have transcended language, time, and continental barriers. His plays are analyzed and performed all over the world; his sonnets are taught in classes of almost every grade level; and his memorable characters have been the inspiration for countless works of visual, literary, and performing arts.

Little is known about Shakespeare's life; however, it is certain that he dedicated much of his life to his art, having written an impressive body of work that includes 37 plays and 154 sonnets. In fact, his works—along with legal and church documents—are the only primary sources of information in existence that can help piece together the life of one of the greatest writers of all time.

William Shakespeare was supposedly born on April 23, 1564, the third of eight children. According to a parish register, he was baptized on April 26th at the Holy Trinity Church in Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire, England. His father, John Shakespeare, was a burgess of the borough who later became bailiff, and his mother, Mary Arden, was the heiress to land that had been passed down for many generations.

Most likely John and Mary Arden Shakespeare sent their son to grammar school in Stratford-upon-Avon, although William did not continue coursework at the university level. At the age of 18, he married Anne Hathaway, who was at least 8 years his elder; and in 1583, their first child Susanna was born. Two years later, twins Hamnet and Judith Shakespeare were born. Hamnet died at the age of 11.

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Between 1585 and 1592, no evidence exists that could document Shakespeare's life during this time, so it is uncertain when and how he began his career as a writer. There is evidence that Shakespeare was in London by the early 1590's, and during this time, he published his first poems, "Venus and Adonis" and "The Rape of Lucrece." He soon joined Lord Chamberlain's Men, a company of players that included the most famous actor of the day, Richard Burbage. By 1597, it appears that Shakespeare had achieved some success, as evidenced by his purchase of a large house in Stratford.

Performing plays written by the foremost writer of that time in the newly built Globe Theatre, Lord Chamberlain's Men prospered. Shakespeare's plays greatly impressed Queen Elizabeth I and the recently accessioned King James, so in 1603, the players changed their name to the King's Men. Shakespeare's success as a writer can be garnered from the fact that his plays were published in octavo editions called "penny-copies," and he was able to retire to his Stratford home in 1611.

Shakespeare was not only a great writer, but an amicable person. He was considered a good friend to his theatre colleagues, two of whom had collected Shakespeare's plays "only to keep the memory of so worthy a friend and fellow alive as was our Shakespeare." This quote appears in actors John Heminge and Henry Condell's dedication to the Earl of Pembroke and the Earl of Montgomery in the First Folio edition of Shakespeare's collected works, which included previously unpublished plays and several sonnets.

Shakespeare died on April 23, 1616 and was buried at the parish church in Stratford-upon-Avon. Although his gravestone originally did not disclose his identity and instead was inscribed with a 4-line verse, Shakespeare's family and friends requested that a monument be built on the church wall. This monument included a bust of the bard, which was inscribed with an epitaph hearkening Shakespeare's talent to the wisdom of Nestor, the genius of Socrates, and the poetry of Virgil.

Elizabethan England

England in the 16th-17th Century

Brief History

Elizabeth I was one of the most popular and long-reigning monarchs in English history—her curly red hair and shrewd political mind are well-known to us through books, movies, and legends. Taking its name from this sovereign figure, Elizabethan England was a time of great literary and artistic flowering, royal turmoil, and general domestic complacency.

Elizabeth was the daughter of Anne Boleyn and the infamous Henry VIII of England. She became Queen of England after her half brother and half sister had each briefly reigned and died. Her sister Mary's reign had been particularly brutal and violent, and her persecution of Protestant propagators earned her the nickname "Bloody Mary." Elizabeth became queen at the age of 25 after her sister's death. She never married, but rather used her position as an unmarried monarch to wield power over her possible allies: the prospect of marriage to the "Virgin Queen" was an instrumental factor in the successful establishment of good relations between England and other countries.

Under Elizabeth, England began colonization of the Americas with Walter Raleigh's excursions to the Atlantic shore and establishment of the Roanoke colony. Also, Sir Francis Drake made a mark in history as the first man to circumnavigate the globe, earning prestige for England and for Elizabeth. The English Navy's defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 was an unexpected blow to Spain and a welcome triumph for England, giving the country the precarious title of a world power.

Entertainment and Recreation

Drama enjoyed its high points during the Elizabethan era as the first public theaters were built in England and plays became a popular form of entertainment for all classes of people. Dance was also a frequent recreation, along with music and song. In addition to the arts, the Elizabethan people engaged in sports. Some of the most popular sports are ones that are still enjoyed today: football, swimming, fishing, bowling, wrestling, and tennis. Also, the inhabitants of a town would gather together on holidays for huge parties and festivals, particularly on dates such as All Hallow's Eve and the Twelfth Night of Christmas.

One rather morbid pastime of Elizabethan England was watching the public punishments of criminals in the town. In addition to the most brutal of reparations, permanent fixtures in any town were the stocks and pillory, where felons would be locked into place for the constant jeers and torment of the townspeople.

Please visit our resource on Elizabethan Literature to find out what people in the 16th-17th century were reading and writing.

Food and Medicine

During the Elizabethan period, table manners were very different than they are now. Even noblemen threw bones on the floor when they were finished, and forks were considered an oddity at any table. Bread and meat were the two most important staples of the English diet, and while they also drank a lot of wine and ate cheese, they ate very few fruits and vegetables.

This poorly balanced diet was one cause of the many illnesses that pervaded Elizabethan England. Other sicknesses resulted from malnutrition and improper cooking habits. Also, smallpox and syphilis were common afflictions passed from person to person. But the major cause of death during Elizabethan England was the plague known as the Black Death, which swept through England and Europe carried by the rats living in the streets. People used herbal remedies for many of such ailments, but unfortunately, only the very rich were able to afford doctors or even apothecaries.

Fashions of the Day

The fashions of both men and women were extravagant and complicated. Men and women alike were very hair-conscious; they spent a lot of time and money getting their hair dyed red or blond (the most fashionable colors). Men would trim and style their beards, and women wore their hair in combs, nets, or jeweled pins. At the time, a high forehead was considered very attractive, so women would pluck the hair from their front hairlines. Both sexes wore wigs, especially when they lost their own hair or if it turned gray.

In terms of clothing, women wore very long dresses that dragged on the ground, and their bodices were very tightly-laced and came to a point at the waist. The sleeves were puffy around the shoulders and tight around the lower arms. Very large ruffles around the neck were popular with both men and women, and were considered a status symbol for the upper classes. Men wore shorter breeches or pants with brightly colored stockings underneath. Large, ornate jewels were worn by both sexes, and were often so heavy that it made dancing difficult.

The Globe

The Globe Theatre—along with the Rose, the Swan, and the Hope—was one of the foremost theatres in the London area during the 16th century. Due to the genius of Shakespeare's writing, the acting prowess of Richard Burbage, and the reputation of Lord Chamberlain's Men (later, the King's Men), the Globe became the most famous and successful theatre of its time. The rocky history of the Globe, however, is not indicative of its steady popularity. Having survived a devastating fire, a law suit, Puritan outrage, and a move to the other side of town, the Globe Theatre—as it still exists today—stands as a symbol of the permanence of Shakespeare's legacy.

The Globe was built with the foundation of James Burbage's 1576 creation, The Theatre, which had been inherited by James's sons, Cuthbert and Richard Burbage. After The Theatre's lease expired, Richard Burbage attempted to appropriate the Blackfriars theatre in Upper Frater Hall, but neighbors of the theatre signed a petition to oust the players from Blackfriars. In 1598, Lord Chamberlain's Men retreated back to The Theatre, dismantled it, and moved its materials to Bankside, an area west of London, in order to build the Globe.

Unfortunately, The Theatre was not owned but leased by the Lord Chamberlain's Men. When the real owner realized what the players had done, he filed a lawsuit against them. Surprisingly, the company not only won this case and continued to perform in their new theatre, but in 1609, won the rights to perform at Blackfriars as well.

An open-air octagonal amphitheater, the Globe could seat up to 3,000 spectators in front of a stage platform nearly 43 feet wide and 28 feet deep.

In 1613, the Globe was reduced to ashes due to the firing of a cannon during a performance of *Henry VIII*, which set the thatched roof of the theatre in flames. Although work began promptly to resurrect the Globe and was completed shortly before Shakespeare's death, the new Globe was destroyed in 1644—two years after the Puritans banned plays and other forms of entertainment.

For over three hundred years, the theatre of one of the most influential playwrights of all time existed only in historical documents and memory—that is, until actor Sam Wanamaker started the reconstruction of the Globe in the early 1990's. Using traditional methods and materials, builders modeled the new Globe after what had been determined about the original Elizabethan theatre's design. Thus, the new Globe boasts of wooden benches and a standing-room only area, and plays in the open-air theatre are performed regardless of the weather.

This third version was completed in 1996 and opened by Queen Elizabeth II with a production of *Henry V* in 1997. The Globe now stands near the original site, and is, not surprisingly, the venue for several Shakespeare plays every year.

TimeLinks

1558 Queen Elizabeth begins her 45-year reign as queen of England.

1560 Mary Queen of Scots' husband, Francis II, is murdered and his 10-year-old brother ascends the throne.

1564 William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe are born in England.

1570 Giambattista della Porta invents the pinhole camera.

1572 Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe is the first to observe a supernova.

1576 Venetian painter Titian dies in Rome.

1576 The first playhouse in England is run by James Burbage.

1580 King Philip II of Spain becomes King Philip I of Portugal after the Portuguese defeat in the Battle of Alcantara.

1587-8 Christopher Marlowe writes *Tamburlaine* and *The Tragedy of Dr. Faustus*.

1588 Spanish Armada is battered by the English navy before escaping around the Scottish coast.

1589 William Lee of England invents the first knitting machine.

1589 *Henry VI, Part 1* becomes William Shakespeare's first play to open onstage.

1590 The first three books of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* are published, and the "Spenserian stanza" is coined.

1591 English colonists who had been sent to Roanoke Island mysteriously disappear.

1595 Shakespeare writes *Romeo and Juliet* and *Love's Labours Lost*.

1596 Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is completed.

1598 Ben Jonson pens *Every Man in His Humour*.

1598 King Henry IV of France issues the Edict of Nantes, allowing Huguenots to practice Protestantism.

circa 1599 The Globe Theatre is built.

1590s After Lisbon closes its spice market to England and the Netherlands, the Dutch East Trading Company is founded.

1603 James VI of Scotland rises to the English throne after the death of Elizabeth I, uniting England and Scotland under one crown under his new name, James I.

1600s Catherine de Vivonne of Paris founds the first salon, or meeting place, for the exchange of cultures and ideas.

1605 Miguel de Cervantes publishes *Don Quixote*.

1605-6 Shakespeare writes *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*.

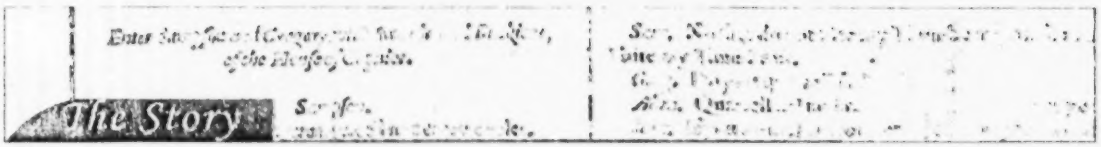
1609 Johannes Kepler writes the first of Kepler's Laws, which establishes that the planets move in an elliptical path around the sun; Galileo builds his first telescope.

1610 King Henry IV of France is assassinated by a fanatic and is succeeded by his son Louis XIII.

1614 English settler John Rolfe marries Pocahontas, the daughter of a Native American chief.

1614 John Webster writes his play *The Duchess of Malfi*.

1616 William Shakespeare and Miguel de Cervantes both die.



Shakespeare's tragic romance *Romeo and Juliet* has been quoted, painted, taught, acted, sung, danced, and read all over the world! Here you will find information about the play itself and gain insight into devices and motifs used by Shakespeare that make this text unique.

Romeo and Juliet: A Synopsis

Prologue

The Chorus sets up the mood by telling the audience in the form of a sonnet that there is a feud between two families in Verona, a town in Italy. Amidst the warring sides, two "star-cross'd lovers" will die for love of one another, and it is only their deaths that will bring peace to Verona.

Act I

The act opens on the streets of Verona, Italy, where two servants of the Capulet family begin to fight two servants from the Montague family. Benvolio, from the Montagues, temporarily defeats the Capulet servants until Tybalt, a noble Capulet resumes the fighting. It is the Prince of Verona, Escala, who succeeds in stopping the battle, claiming that it disrupts civil peace. Romeo soon enters, professing his love for a woman named Rosaline. Meanwhile, on another Verona street, the nobleman Paris expresses his desire to marry Juliet, Old Capulet's daughter. Old Capulet concedes to the marriage if Paris can win Juliet's affection; however, at the Capulet house, Juliet tells her mother that she has not even considered marriage yet. That night, the Capulets host a banquet. Romeo had decided to go because he found out that Rosaline will be there. When Romeo arrives at the banquet, he immediately falls in love with Juliet. After they meet and exchange words, she falls for Romeo as well. It is only until the lovers part when they realize the other comes from their rival family.

Act II

In the famous balcony scene, Romeo hides in the Capulets' garden to catch sight of Juliet. When she appears at a window, Romeo reveals himself. Both Romeo and Juliet express their love for each other and decide to marry, despite their last names. Friar Laurence decides to help the young lovers in an effort to end the families' feuding. Meanwhile, on the Verona streets, Romeo is informed that Tybalt has challenged him to a duel. Soon Juliet's Nurse enters, and Romeo tells her that Juliet should meet him at the Friar's cell so that they can be married. Juliet receives the message, and that afternoon, the lovers are married.

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Act III

This act opens with Mercutio and Benvolio discussing whether or not there will be a brawl. Indeed, when Tybalt and the Capulets, as well as Romeo, arrive on the scene, Tybalt challenges Romeo to a duel. Romeo refuses to fight him, and instead, Mercutio takes his place. As a result, Mercutio is slain by Tybalt, and in retribution, Romeo kills Tybalt. When the Prince finds out what had transpired, Romeo is banished from Verona. Juliet is soon told of the recent events, and both Romeo and Juliet are in great despair. The Friar tries to calm Romeo and persuades him to go to Mantua to wait for further instruction. And although Paris delays the wedding during the time of mourning for Tybalt, Old Capulet decides that Paris and Juliet should be married in three days. When Juliet hears of her father's hasty plan, she decides to go to the Friar for advice.

Act IV

At the Friar's cell, Juliet has threatened to kill herself. The Friar advises Juliet to drink a potion that will make her appear dead for forty-two hours. Because her parents will think she has died, she can easily escape to Mantua to be with Romeo. Juliet returns to her house, tells her father that she has changed her mind about her marriage to Paris, and then drinks the potion in a toast to her beloved. The Nurse enters Juliet's room to awaken her in preparation for the wedding, but finds what appears to be Juliet's corpse.

Act V

In Mantua, Romeo receives news that Juliet has died. Not knowing the real story because the Friar's letter—which holds the complete truth—had not been successfully delivered, Romeo decides to take his own life and die alongside his beloved. Hearing that Romeo did not receive his letter, the Friar proceeds immediately to the graveyard, where Juliet awaits. When Romeo arrives at the graveyard, he encounters Paris. The two begin to fight, and Romeo slays Paris. He then approaches Juliet's tomb, believes her to be dead, and drinks the poison to relieve him of his grief. Friar Laurence arrives too late to see Romeo alive but just in time to see Juliet awaken. When he tells Juliet that Romeo has committed suicide, she follows suit, using her beloved's dagger to slay herself. Shortly, the Prince, the Montagues, and the Capulets enter, and the Friar informs all present of Romeo and Juliet's tragic love. The Prince blames the catastrophe on the warring families, and realizing that their feud has gone on too long, Old Montague and Old Capulet declare peace.

Things to Think About: Themes

As in all of Shakespeare's plays, *Romeo and Juliet* is full of recurring motifs and images. In addition to the more obvious themes of love, war, and death apparent in the Bard's tragic tale, there are other concepts that Shakespeare refers to again and again, all of which work to enrich the already engaging plot and characters. To supplement your reading and understanding of *Romeo and Juliet*, we have explained some of these themes below.

Light and Dark

Throughout *Romeo and Juliet*, Shakespeare utilizes light or the absence of light as a motif that enhances and/or contributes to the mood of a particular scene. As we watch Romeo and Juliet fall in love, and we watch as more and more obstacles get in the way of their burgeoning love, Shakespeare has alternately included light and dark images in the text of his play. When Romeo first encounters Juliet in the Capulet house, he exclaims "O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!" and when he sees Juliet later in the famous balcony scene, the smitten Romeo says, "But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks? / It is the east, and Juliet is the sun."

But this optimistic light fades when situations start to go awry. In Act III, scene 5, Romeo and Juliet have met secretly in the Capulet orchard during the night. In this case, the light is not a friend to the young lovers, because as soon as day breaks, they must part. Indeed, when Juliet persuades Romeo to leave, she states, "O, now be gone; more light and light it grows" and Romeo replies, "More light and light; more dark and dark our woes!" At the end of Romeo and Juliet's lives, and the play itself, darkness has completely taken over. The Prince exclaims, "A glooming peace this morning with it brings; / The sun, for sorrow, will not show his head . . . For never was a story of more woe / Than this of Juliet and her Romeo."

These are just a few examples of references to light and darkness in Shakespeare's play. See if you can find more.

Time

Also ubiquitous in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is the motif of time. In the very first scene after the Prologue, Romeo proclaims, "Ay me! sad hours seem long." In this early scene, Romeo mourns his unrequited love of Rosaline, and the feeling is so intense that time is affected. But these long hours do not last for much longer.

When the action picks up in the play—when Romeo and Juliet meet and soon realize their relationship cannot develop without a reconciliation between their families—the characters note that time passes more quickly. The love of Romeo and Juliet has developed at an accelerated pace: As Juliet says in Act II, scene 2, "It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden; / Too like the lightning." As their love has developed quickly, so does the approach of the day Juliet will be married to Paris. Time has become an enemy of Romeo and Juliet's love, as Old Capulet has decided to hasten the marriage of Juliet and Paris in order to help her overcome what he believes is her grief for Tybalt's death. Paris tells the Friar: "Now, sir, her father counts it dangerous / That she do give her sorrow so much sway, / And in his wisdom hastes our marriage / To stop the inundation of her tears." The timing of the marriage is off, as was Tybalt's death. Time is passing at such a fast pace that it must also take the lives of young Romeo and Juliet. In Act IV, scene 5, Old Capulet observes, "Death lies on her like an untimely frost."

Fate

Another theme Shakespeare incorporates in *Romeo and Juliet* is that of fate. In his play, Shakespeare toys with the idea that fate or destiny is a supernatural power predetermining the path of one's life. As the Chorus states immediately in the Prologue of *Romeo and Juliet*, "A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life." In other words, the young Romeo and Juliet are doomed from the very beginning: their "stars" are misaligned. No matter what they do to attempt to repair their tragic situation, something always inhibits them from prevailing: Although they fall in love, their families prevent this love; although they get married, Tybalt is slain by Romeo, and Juliet must marry Paris; although Juliet escapes marriage by pretending to die, Romeo does not get the Friar's note and believes she is dead.

Near the beginning of the play, in Act I, scene 4, Romeo aptly predicts his own fate:

I fear, too early: for my mind misgives

Some consequence yet hanging in the stars

Shall bitterly begin his fearful date

With this night's revels and expire the term

Of a despised life closed in my breast

By some vile forfeit of untimely death.

Indeed, even though Romeo attempts to challenge fate, stating "I defy you, stars!" in Act V, scene 1, later in the play (Act III, scene 1), Mercutio is killed by Tybalt, and Romeo attributes his death to "this day's black fate." Shortly afterward in the scene, when Romeo kills Tybalt, the exasperated Romeo exclaims, "O, I am fortune's fool!"

The reference to fate in *Romeo and Juliet* is not specific to this particular Shakespearean work—it is a popular theme in many of his plays. To increase your understanding of commonly used devices in Shakespeare's works, you can explore how the Bard uses fate to enhance the plot in *Macbeth* and *King Lear*.

The Art of Writing: Literary Devices

Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet has an edge-of-the-seat plot full of murder, love, feuding, and betrayal. Driv this tragic play forward is the fast-paced, witty, and convoluted dialogue of the script. Effectively capturing audience's attention, Shakespeare has used a number of important literary devices, which serve to amuse, gu and hypnotize the viewer of this production.

Puns

A pun is a joke based on the use of a word, or more than one word, that has more than one meaning but the same sound. Mercutio and Romeo often exchange puns with one another in the play:

Mercutio--"Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance."

Romeo--"Not I, believe me. You have dancing shoes / With nimble soles; I have a soul of lead..."(I iv 13-5)

Romeo has used the word "sole" when referring to Mercutio's shoes, then made a pun by referring to his ow "soul."

Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing describes when a piece of dialogue or action in a work refers to events that will happen later the story even though the characters have no prior knowledge such events will occur. In the following quote, Benvolio is consoling Romeo on his loss regarding Rosaline:

Benvolio--"Take thou some new infection to thy eye, / And the rank poison of the old will die" (I ii 49-50)

Here Benvolio unknowingly foreshadows the fact that as soon as Romeo sees Juliet, the "new infection," the "rank poison" of Rosaline dies and he can think only of his new Capulet love.

Metaphor

A metaphor is a comparison in which an object or person is directly likened to something else that could be completely unrelated. The most famous metaphor in Romeo and Juliet is Romeo's monologue outside the Capulet orchard:

Romeo--"But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks? / It is the east, and Juliet is the sun." (II ii 2-3

Here, Juliet is metaphorically compared to the sun despite the fact that she has nothing physically in commo with a glowing star hundreds of thousands of miles away.

Personification

Personification occurs when an inanimate object or concept is given the qualities of a person or animal. This is exemplified when Juliet is waiting for her lover, Romeo, to come to her windowsill in the Capulet orchard.

Juliet--"For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night / Whiter than new snow on a raven's back. / Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-brow'd night" (III ii 18-20)

Obviously, the night does not have wings, nor does it have a brow, but giving it these qualities adds a mystique to Juliet's monologue and a poetic quality to the language.

Oxymoron

An oxymoron describes when two juxtaposed words have opposing or very diverse meanings. In the following quotation, Juliet has just learned that Romeo murdered her cousin, Tybalt, and she is venting her feelings of anger at her lover for hurting her family.

Juliet--"Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!" (III ii 77)

When Juliet refers to Romeo as a "beautiful tyrant," she is expressing an oxymoron because the acts of a tyrant will rarely be referred to as beautiful.

Paradox

A paradox is a statement or situation with seemingly contradictory or incompatible components. On closer examination, however, the combination of these components is indeed appropriate. For example, see how Juliet describes Romeo in the following quote:

Juliet--"O serpent heart, hid with a flowering face!" (III ii 75)

While Juliet knows that Romeo is not a serpent nor does he have a face full of flowers, her use of these descriptions show how paradoxically he is her lover and the murderer of her cousin at the same time.

The Complete *Romeo and Juliet*: (http://the-tech.mit.edu/Shakespeare/romeo_juliet/)

Romeo and Juliet

Shakespeare homepage | Romeo and Juliet

Entire play in one page

Act 1, Prologue: PROLOGUE
Act 1, Scene 1: Verona. A public place.
Act 1, Scene 2: A street.
Act 1, Scene 3: A room in Capulet's house.
Act 1, Scene 4: A street.
Act 1, Scene 5: A hall in Capulet's house.

Act 2, Prologue: PROLOGUE
Act 2, Scene 1: A lane by the wall of Capulet's orchard.
Act 2, Scene 2: Capulet's orchard.
Act 2, Scene 3: Friar Laurence's cell.
Act 2, Scene 4: A street.
Act 2, Scene 5: Capulet's orchard.
Act 2, Scene 6: Friar Laurence's cell.

Act 3, Scene 1: A public place.
Act 3, Scene 2: Capulet's orchard.
Act 3, Scene 3: Friar Laurence's cell.
Act 3, Scene 4: A room in Capulet's house.
Act 3, Scene 5: Capulet's orchard.

Act 4, Scene 1: Friar Laurence's cell.
Act 4, Scene 2: Hall in Capulet's house.
Act 4, Scene 3: Juliet's chamber.
Act 4, Scene 4: Hall in Capulet's house.
Act 4, Scene 5: Juliet's chamber.

Act 5, Scene 1: Mantua. A street.
Act 5, Scene 2: Friar Laurence's cell.
Act 5, Scene 3: A churchyard; in it a tomb belonging to the Capulets.

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Inspired by one of the greatest and saddest love stories of all time, artists across centuries and oceans have retold the tale of *Romeo and Juliet* in various forms and incarnations. This section explores the connections across the arts and highlights some of our favorite versions of the tragic tale as depicted in films, operas, ballets and paintings.

Visual Arts

Because the characters of Shakespeare's tale are so memorable and the events that occur in his plays are successfully described, many artists have produced images conveying their visual interpretations of particular scenes. This portion provides information about some artistic renditions of *Romeo and Juliet*, links to the galleries that house them, information on film versions of the play, and photographs of the Romeo and Juliet Houses in Verona.

After Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* started to appear in theatres all over the world, the characters starring in his play were depicted on campus. And shortly after the invention of the moving image, Shakespeare's works began appearing on film. Explore these resources to see how his plays have inspired visual representations in all forms of media, as well as to view photographs of Juliet's actual balcony in Verona.

Shakespeare Interpreted

William Shakespeare's classic play *Romeo and Juliet* was the source of inspiration for artists, composers, writers, and choreographers all over the world. From the color prints of William Blake to the oil paintings of Frederic, Lord Leighton, the characters of the Bard's tragic play have been illuminated via brushstrokes, engravings, and pen. In this section, you will find examples of oil paintings that depict characters and scenes from the play, as well as biographical information about the artists who painted them. The artists we highlight are:

Frederic, Lord Leighton
Benjamin West
Frank Dicksee
Henry Briggs

For further examples of work based on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, see this resource from Emory University.

Film

Several versions of Shakespeare's tragic novel have been captured on film throughout the 20th century. Find out who directed and starred in selected productions on this informative resource.

Photographic Resources

This outside resource takes you to photographs from Verona, Italy! Here are images of Juliet's House in Via Cappello, Romeo's House in Via Arche, and Juliet's Tomb in the convent of the Capuchins outside the town walls. You can also view a close-up picture of Juliet's balcony.

Performing Arts

Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* has been reinvented in musical theater, symphonic works, opera, and dance. In this section, you will read detailed information about significant stage performances based on the timeless Elizabethan classic.

West Side Story

Although *West Side Story* was not the only musical produced that was based on Shakespeare's tragic romance, it is certainly the most well-known and widely performed. In this section, you can read background information on the popular musical and access a table highlighting similarities between the musical and the original play.

Opera

In this section, you will explore operatic versions of Shakespeare's tragic romance, including in-depth information about operas by Gounod, Bellini, and Delius, and the composers themselves.

Ballet

Countless ballets have been set to scores by Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, Berlioz, and Delius. Find out how various choreographers have altered Shakespeare's plot using music by these and other great composers. Also read about Prokofiev and his wonderful score, the most utilized ballet score on *Romeo and Juliet*.

Symphonic works

Have you ever wondered what Juliet would sound like if she were represented as an instrument in an orchestra? What about Friar Lawrence? Russian composer Tchaikovsky and French composer Berlioz have both created symphonies based on events and characters in *Romeo and Juliet*. Read about these works and more in this section.

Literary Arts

In this section, you can explore a wealth of resources on works written about two young lovers before Shakespeare was even born, works by Elizabethan contemporaries, articles regarding the Bard's plays, and information about a magazine inspired by his life and work.

Elizabethan Literature

Shakespeare's plays and sonnets may be the most recited and read of all literary works from the Elizabethan era, but Christopher Marlowe, Edmund Spenser, and Ben Jonson also produced extraordinary works. Learn about these wonderful writers and more.

Pre- And Post-Shakespeare

William Shakespeare was neither the first nor the last person to write about young lovers from feuding families. In this section you will find information about literary works that inspired Shakespeare to write *Romeo and Juliet*, as well as revisions to his text written after he died.

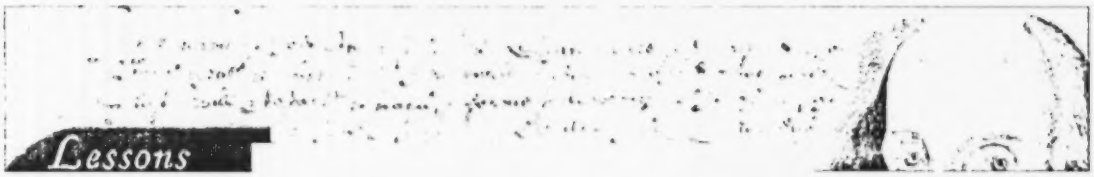
Other Resources

Online Literary Criticism Collection http://www.ipl.org/cgi-bin/ref/litcrit/ litcrit.out.pl?au=sha-9

The Internet Public Library provides extensive resources on Shakespeare's works, such as articles, literary criticisms, discussions on his plays, and many links with descriptions to other Shakespeare sites.

Shakespeare Magazine
http://www.shakespearemag.com/

This is the Web site for print magazine Shakespeare, sponsored by Georgetown University and Cambridge University Press. Shakespeare is published three times a year and covers all the latest information and available resources for teachers and Shakespeare fans. You will find teaching resources, an archive of articles, and descriptions of past issues.



Teaching Shakespeare has never been more fun! Use these lesson plans to facilitate your students' understanding of the themes, plot, and characters present in *Romeo and Juliet*. Also see below for a list of Internet resources for additional lessons and helpful resources.

Writing Using Character Analysis

In this 4-day lesson, 9th grade students will explore a variety of literary texts and relate them to their own lives and the lives of others. Students will also create an original narrative poem in iambic pentameter based on one of the characters in *Romeo and Juliet*. The poem should have at least twenty couplets and contain the meter of Shakespeare's iambic pentameter.

In this 4-day lesson, 9th grade students will explore a variety of literary texts and relate them to their own lives and the lives of others. Students will also create an original narrative poem in iambic pentameter based on one of the characters in *Romeo and Juliet*. This lesson is part of our mini-site, "*Exploring Romeo and Juliet*."

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Creative Writing Using Character Analysis in Romeo and Juliet

Length:	4 Days
Grades:	9th grade
Subjects:	Language Arts, Visual Arts
Subtopics:	Computer Arts, Design, Journalism, Literature, Poetry, Technology, Video
Intelligences Being Addressed:	Interpersonal Intelligence; Intrapersonal Intelligence; Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence; Visual/Spatial Intelligence
Dimensions of Learning:	Acquisition and integration of knowledge; Extension and refinement of knowledge; Meaningful use of knowledge
Overview:	Students will respond in many ways to a variety of literary texts and relate them to their own life and the lives of others. Students will create an original narrative poem based on one of the characters in Romeo and Juliet. The poem should have at least twenty couplets and contain the meter of Shakespeare's iambic pentameter.
Equipment:	Computer with word processing software, such as Microsoft Word Video Camera VCR/TV
Materials:	Paper, cardboard, wallpaper, glue, scissors etc. Supplies to create their individual scrapbooks
Hand Outs:	None
Student Supplies:	Paper, Pen or Pencil, Notebook
Teacher Internet Resources:	See our list of related Web sites
National Standards for Arts Education:	Theater 5-8 #1, #2 Visual Art 5-8 #3, #4, #6 Other Standards addressed by this lesson: **Language Arts** Writing 6-8 #1, #2, #3, #4 Reading 6-8 #6 Listening and Speaking 6-8 #8
Instructional Objectives:	Students will be able to: • identify couplets • discuss the concept of narration and narrative poetry • analize a character from the play • recognize and use iambic pentameter and meter

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Strategies:	They will do this through the creation of a two line rap about themselves, by writing a short one-paragraph description about a character from the play, and then using the character description and the rap to create a couplet.

Instructional Plan:

ESSENTIAL SKILLS:

1. Students will be able to identify couplets through a two-line rap they create about themselves. The concept of narration and narrative poetry will be discussed.

2. Students will choose one of their favorite characters from the play, *Romeo and Juliet*, and write a short one-paragraph description about that character.

3. Students will then take the paragraph and write the description in couplets, having every two lines end with a rhyming word.

4. As students write, they will make certain through examples in the works by Shakespeare, that they use the meter, iambic pentameter, with five strong beats per line.

5. Students will continue with this process throughout the class period.

GUIDED, INDEPENDENT PRACTICE & FEEDBACK:

Students will share their poetry in an oral presentation in class. They will listen and critique the writing of their peers. Each class will compile their creative narrative poems in a class scrapbook to be displayed on "THE (insert your school name) BARDS" table in the classroom. Each student can also be video taped giving his/her presentation and be evaluated according to content, dramatization, use of meter and rhyme, neatness, and originality. All work will be typed using Microsoft Word on the computer.

Assessment:	Students will have a mini Bards' Fair to display their creative writing scrapbooks and to play their videotapes while others students and staff tour the classroom and see other works. Parents may also be present to see the display on a parent night conference.
Extensions:	Those who are artistic can draw pictures of their favorite characters to accompany the scrapbooks. These may also be displayed during the fair.

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Teacher References:	*Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare
Author:	Ms. Barbara Lois Fullard Teacher of English J. Hayden Johnson Junior High School
Submission Date:	March 15th, 2001

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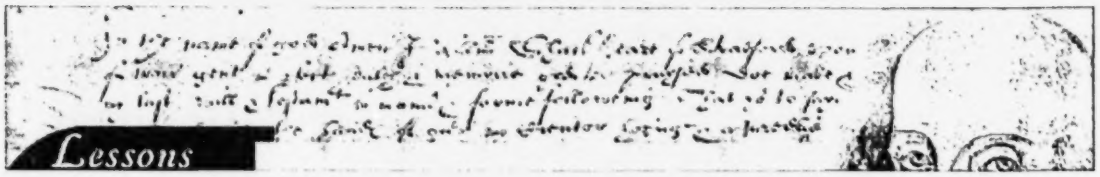

"...with patient ears attend"

This lesson for high school students helps enhance students' ability to analyze and interpret dramatic scripts. Through this lesson, the structural and linguistic intricacies of Shakespeare's text will become accessible to your students. Students will also develop their own interpretations of the text.

The study of any dramatic script is enhanced by the combined approach of close textual analysis and "hands-on" interpretation. Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* lends itself particularly well to this treatment for grades 9 through 12. With some teacher guidance from these two perspectives, the structural and linguistic energies of the play become accessible to this age group. Mining the richness of the structure and the intensity of the language provides inspiration for students to want to develop their own interpretations of the dramatic possibilities inherent in the script. Following are suggestions for classroom implementation of the twofold approach of analysis and performance.

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"...with patient ears attend"

Length:	10 fifty minute sessions (more time, of course would be desirable)
Grades:	9 through 12; (some of the suggestions could also be used in 8th grade)
Subjects:	Language Arts, Performing Arts, Social Studies
Subtopics:	Dance, History, Literature, Music, Theater
Intelligences Being Addressed:	Interpersonal Intelligence, Intrapersonal Intelligence, Musical/Rhythmic Intelligence, Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence
Dimensions of Learning:	Acquisition and integration of knowledge, Extension and refinement of knowledge, Meaningful use of knowledge, Productive habits of the mind
Overview:	The study of any dramatic script is enhanced by the combined approach of close textual analysis and "hands-on" interpretation. Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* lends itself particularly well to this treatment for grades 9 through 12. With some teacher guidance from these two perspectives, the structural and linguistic energies of the play become accessible to this age group. Mining the richness of the structure and the intensity of the language provides inspiration for students to want to develop their own interpretations of the dramatic possibilities inherent in the script. Following are suggestions for classroom implementation of the twofold approach of analysis and performance.
Equipment:	Access to computers; VCR; TV
Other Materials:	Videotapes of one of the classical ballet performances of *Romeo and Juliet* and of *West Side Story* would enhance the study of the play.
Hand Outs:	none
Student Supplies:	Notebook, paper, pencil
Teacher Internet Resources:	Please see our list of WebLinks for a variety of resources that can be used for this lesson.
National Standards for Arts Education:	Dance 9-12 #7 Music 9-12 #6, #8 Theater 9-12 #2, #3 Visual Arts #6

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	Other Standards relating to this lesson: **Language Arts 9-12** Reading #5, #6, #7 Listening and Speaking #8 **History 9-12** Historical Understanding #1, #2
Instructional Objectives:	Students will: - sharpen their understanding of Shakespeare's basic structural design of the narratives of his plays (Note for students that although Shakespeare, according to scholars, did not divide his plays into acts—the division into acts being made later by others—the scene sequences fall into a pattern of rising action, climax, and denouement.) - gain insight into and appreciation for the artistic impact of the interplay of dramatic rhythms and tone qualities that Shakespeare builds into the script - recognize specific ways Shakespeare uses structure, diction, and imagery to develop characterization and foreshadowing - identify aspects of theme and plot that pull against each other to give the play range, depth, and dramatic force - appreciate how the ambiguity of aspects of the play allows for different stage interpretations - gain deepened insight into the damaging implications of a "feuding" mentality - recognize specific aspects of the script that could serve as inspiration to transfer the play into other genres of arts expression - experience the excitement of creating their own vision of how scenes of the play could be interpreted and staged - strengthen process skills of reading, writing, and analysis, and exercise oral and collaborative skills through satisfactory completion of a variety of assignments generated in the study of the play.
Strategies:	The curriculum unit could incorporate several methods of instruction: lecture (limited); questioning; discussion; student presentations; oral and written testing; expository and creative writing assignments; collaborative problem-solving projects; viewing; performance activities; research (both print and Web); self, peer, and teacher evaluation. The approach would be primarily inductive and student-centered.

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Instructional Plan:

Student Presentations

- Assign a few students to develop a brief class presentation on the cultural outlook of the Renaissance, giving particular attention to the ebullient tone generated by humanism, and the growing interest in science, art, and the study of ancient classics. Provide students with relevant books and materials or allow them to search for resources on the Internet, such as the following:

- Internet Medieval Sourcebook
- Virtual Renaissance: A Journey Through Time
- WebMuseum, Paris: La Renaissance

- Assign a few students to develop a brief presentation on the nature of the Italian city-states and the role of dominant families within the social and political mores of this framework. Provide materials or allow students to search for resources on the Internet, such as the following:

- Backgrounds to the Italian Renaissance
- Decameron Web
- Map of Italian City-States

Lecture and Discussion

- Read aloud, together as a class, the opening "Prologue" sonnet. Discuss the fourteen-line/ three quatrain-couplet pattern of the Shakespearean (English) sonnet. Explicate the "Prologue," defining the statement made in each quatrain and specifically note how the couplet serves as a unifying statement. Note the iambic pentameter, and point out that Shakespearean actors are challenged to study the images and meaning of lines closely to avoid articulating the iambic pentameter in a sing-song manner. Have students also consider where and why Shakespeare moves into prose in some places.

- Ask students to look closely at the lines and images of the "Prologue," examining it for "clues" of what might be encountered in the play. Encourage students to answer such questions as: What, specifically, is the play going to be about? Who are the principal players going to be? What suggestions emerge about the basic nature of the two lovers? What general tone quality is achieved by the fact that the Chorus delivers the "Prologue"? What do images such as "star-crossed" and "death-marked" suggest?

- Call attention to the fact that Greek tragedies used the Chorus (strophe; anti-strophe) to provide background and maintain structural Unities (place, time, theme, and character), to reinforce characterization and theme, and to set up dramatic irony (in which the audience knows what is going to happen) by summing up the narrative of the play in advance. Encourage students who have read selections of Greek tragedies to make connections; also note that Shakespeare often "borrowed" ideas for themes and forms from earlier sources, but transformed them in unique ways.

Small Groups

Assessment:	Instruments such as rubrics used for assessment of achievement levels in the process skills of reading, writing, collaboration, and speaking would apply to assignments in this curriculum unit. Additional components of assessment would be students' level of engagement in class study of the play and related activities, and the quality of creative endeavors initiating from the study of the play.

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Extensions: Following is a suggested list of general problem-solving assignments that could be used for class discussion, oral or written testing, formal presentations, collaborative projects, in-class or outside writing assignments, and performing arts activities.

- Act I presents Shakespeare's skillful handling of contrasts in building the dramatic structure of *Romeo and Juliet*. The formality of the opening "Prologue" is followed by a bantering exchange between the servants of the feuding families. Trace specific ways that Shakespeare moves the play from what, at first, seems a somewhat comic street brawl toward what will eventually become a tragic encounter. In addition to the movement of plot, give close consideration to the interplay of language. Note, for instance, the lyrical language of "love" played against the commanding tone of "authority." Notice, also, how the language forcibly underscores the tensions between youth and age, the varying levels of emotional involvement in the feud, and the diverse perceptions about Juliet's readiness for marriage.

- Research some background on the Italian"mask" (masquerade ball) as a social event in the time period in which the play is set. Some students, particularly ninth grade, might be interested in making masks and or developing a brief presentation of a vignette from Act I; scenes iv or v.

- Closely examine the "Prologue" (sonnet") at the beginning of Act II. What do you think is its dramatic purpose? Develop an argument explaining what you think it contributes to the play or why you think it could be deleted. Draw specifics from the text to support your point of view.

- Act II; scene ii is one of the best-known and oft-quoted love scenes in literature. What are some of the compelling aspects that make it so? Develop a close analysis in which you define, with specific references, aspects of the text that are key elements in building artistic power. Give particular attention to such aspects as contrast in images (light-dark), fluctuation in tone qualities, declarations of love in tension with embedded images of foreboding.

- Much of the power of the play comes from Shakespeare's ingenious development of ambiguity in the personalities of the characters, giving them a complexity that adds verisimilitude and depth to the narrative. Build a specific (textual) analysis of how Shakespeare builds ambiguity in one of the following: Mercutio; Capulet (Juliet's father); the Nurse; the Friar; Romeo; Juliet.

- Consider the basic movement of the play from the point of view of "If only...". Make a list of incidents that, if a different decision had been made, would have averted the tragic ending. In sharing ideas on the list, consider whether or not Shakespeare designed the "What if's" as a structural force that would contribute to the building of one of his main "messages" of the play.

- A love story that scholars believe Shakespeare was undoubtedly familiar with is Chaucer's *Troilus and Cressida*. This story is drawn from still another love story, that of Helen of Troy and the Trojan War. Paris is the name of a key figure in the story of Helen and the Trojan War. As a special project, review the story of the Trojan War, read

Teacher References:	*Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare
Author:	Jayne Karsten The Key School Annapolis, Maryland
Submission Date:	March 18th, 2001

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WebLinks and Lessons

Folger Shakespeare Library/Teaching Shakespeare
http://www.folger.edu/

Web Site Type: Primary Source
Subjects: Language Arts
Subtopics: English, Literature, Theater

Summary: The Folger Library is a private research institution that contains a collection of British and European books from the 15th-18th centuries, highlighting literature, culture, and religion. The Shakespeare Collection features authentic editions of his works, dating from the late 17th through the mid-20th century.

The Complete Works of William Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet
http://the-tech.mit.edu/Shakespeare/romeo_juliet/

Web Site Type: Primary Source
Subjects: Language Arts
Subtopics: English, Literature, Theater

Summary: Students can find a full online text of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

TeacherFirst.com: Romeo and Juliet
http://www.teachersfirst.com/bard/romeo.html

Web Site Type: Primary Source and four lessons
Subjects: Language Arts
Subtopics: English, Literature

Summary: This Web page cites links that support or create a lesson for Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Here you will find study questions, a full online text, a tour of Verona, Italy, four great lesson plans/units, and a Romeo and Juliet survey!

Internet Public Library: The Shakespeare Bookshelf
http://www.ipl.org/reading/shakespeare/shakespeare.html

Web Site Type: Organization
Subjects: Language Arts
Subtopics: English, Literature, Theater

Summary: The Internet Public Library offers all of Shakespeare's tragedies, comedies, poems, and historical tales at Bartleby.com with full online text by scene, complimented with listed dramatis personae.

Shakespeare and Company
http://www.shakespeare.org/

Web Site Type: Organization
Subjects: Performing Arts/Language Arts
Subtopics: English, Literature, Theater

Summary: Visit the *Shakespeare & Company* Web site to find live Shakespearean performances, a calendar of events, and information on an actor training program and in-house education programs.

The Shakespeare Resource Center
http://www.bardweb.net/words.html

Web Site Type: Primary Source
Subjects: Language Arts
Subtopics: English, Literature

Summary: This Web site reviews the language and grammar William Shakespeare used in his works. There are also links available to further explore other Shakespearean works, the Elizabethan language, accents used, and vocabulary definitions.

Community Learning Network: Romeo and Juliet Theme Page
http://www.cln.org/themes/romeo_juliet.html

Web Site Type: Index
Subjects: Language Arts
Subtopics: English, Literature

Summary: This index page offers many links to two types of resources, curricular resources and instructional materials (lesson plans).

Romeo and Juliet Lesson Plans

National Council of Teachers of English: Romeo and Juliet lesson
http://www.ncte.org/teach/Primack26010.shtml

Web Site Type: lesson
Subjects: Language Arts
Subtopics: English, Literature, Theater

Summary: This lesson plan engages the students by having them participate directly. The teacher divides the class into two groups, the Montagues and the Capulets, and asks them to read and comment on the play as their particular events occur.

"You Kiss by the Book": Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*
http://edsitement.neh.gov/lessonplans/shakespeare.html

Web Site Type: lesson
Subjects: Language Arts
Subtopics: English, Literature, Theater

Summary: In this lesson plan, students will discuss forms and conventions used by Shakespeare to enhance the plot and the performance of *Romeo and Juliet*, including imagery and poetic forms. They will also act out particular scenes.

Teachers in Transition: Romeo and Juliet Unit
http://bellproject.educ.queensu.ca/tint/rj/

Web Site Type: lesson
Subjects: Language Arts
Subtopics: English, Literature,

Summary: This lesson unit (16 days in length) contains a brief biographical sketch of William Shakespeare's life and works, the historical background of the middle ages, and Elizabethan theater. The lessons include activites, handouts, and group assignments.

Romeo and Juliet Lesson
http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us/lausd/resources/shakespeare/webguide.html

Web Site Type: lesson
Subjects: Language Arts
Subtopics: English, Literature,

Summary: With study guide by Joel Littauer, this unit was developed as part of Schools of California Online Resources for Educators Project. It is a three-stage unit where students research information on characters and the plot in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. This lesson unit is best suited for ninth grade students.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

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